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FILE ONLY

French hostage killed, group says

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BEIRUT, Lebanon — Islamic Jihad, the Shiite Moslem faction believed to be holding six U.S. hostages and four Frenchmen, said Wednesday it executed one of the Frenchmen.

The pro-Iranian terrorists claimed they killed Michel Seurat, 37, in retaliation for France's support of Iraq in the 5-year-old Persian Gulf War.

The claim, delivered to a news service, could not be verified independently. Seurat, kidnapped last May 22 in Moslem west Beirut, worked for the Beirut-based Institute of Middle East Affairs.

The statement, accompanied by a small color photo-

graph of Seurat in captivity, also was sent to Beirut newspapers. The picture showed Seurat standing, unshaven, in front of a white wall, his arms folded across his chest. He appeared pale and drawn. He wore a short-sleeved blue shirt and was pictured from the waist up.

In Paris, the French Foreign Ministry said it "was doing everything to verify this abominable claim."

Islamic Jihad, or holy war, also says it kidnapped six U.S. citizens who still are missing: Associated Press correspondent Terry Anderson, 37; the Rev. Lawrence Jenco, 50; and American University of Beirut employees Peter Kilburn, 60, David Jacobsen, 54, and Thom-



Agence France-Presse

SEURAT: Was kidnapped in Lebanon on May 22

as Sutherland, 53.

Last October, the group said it killed the sixth, U.S. Embassy official William Buckley. A body was never found.